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GROUND MEAT IN SAVORY WAYS

A radio conversation between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Thursday, October 20, 1938, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home program, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 93 associate radio stations.

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WALLACE KADDERLY:

And now Ruth Van Deman of the Bureau of Home Economics.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

Wallace, you remember our friend Mrs. Young Homemaker on the West Coast.

KADDERLY:

Certainly. How's she coming on with her budgeting?

VAN DEMAN:

Fine. I've just had a letter from her. She says "the Young Homemakers, believe it or not, are still balancing their books at the end of every month". You know they have to budget now for a family of three.

KADDERLY:

Yes, I met the third member of that family--one of the prettiest, healthiest, best-cared-for babies I ever saw.

VAN DEMAN:

They say the baby eats more than either of them.--- Well, what's important just now is this P.S. to her letter. Read it, aloud if you don't mind.

KADDERLY:

"Won't you devote a program to the various ways you can find of using ground beef(humble hamburger on up). Or is that out of your line?" - - - Very much in your line, isn't it?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, our meat leaflets are full of good ways to cook ground meat. Meat patties with tomato gravy---meat loaf---ground beef broiled on toast---chili con carne---hamburg steak on onion rings---hamburg in a mixed grill - - -

KADDERLY:

Please, please. That's too fast for me to handle.

VAN DEMAN:

And Salisbury steak - - -

KADDERLY:

That one of Morse Salisbury's concoctions?

VAN DEMAN:

No. I believe it was named for a Doctor Salisbury, a physician.

(over)

KADDERLY:

What makes it the doctor's speciality?

VAN DEMAN:

I don't quite know. As far as I can tell it's just good lean beef, probably from the lower round, chopped not too fine and not too coarse, shaped into a rather thick cake, the size to suit your appetite.

KADDERLY:

About 2 inches thick by 3 or 4 long?

VAN DEMAN:

That certainly wouldn't be a skimpy serving. Then the individual steaks are well anointed with melted butter or beef drippings, and slipped into the broiler to brown and cook, not too fast, but so they'll hold their juice and be a nice pink rare all the way through. The longer meat cooks the more juice it's bound to lose, even when you keep the heat moderate.

KADDERLY:

What about a few mushrooms broiled along with that meat?

VAN DEMAN:

To put the "humble hamburger" right up into the social register?

KADDERLY:

Isn't that what Mrs. Young Homemaker had in mind?

VAN DEMAN:

I think it is. And if the mushrooms weren't handy, chopped olives, green or ripe, sprinkled over the broiled meat or stirred into the brown gravy would be a good substitute. Or very finely chopped parsley and chives mixed with melted butter is always a good garnish for beef.

KADDERLY:

I liked the sound of that ground beef broiled on toast you mentioned a moment ago.

VAN DEMAN:

Haven't you ever tried that?

KADDERLY:

Not to know it.

VAN DEMAN:

Maybe your thoughts were on higher things the day that was on the menu. Anyway it's a very good and easy way to serve ground beef, especially if there are youngsters in the family. A pound of ground beef is enough to cover eight slices of toast. And all that you need to do is to season the meat with salt and moisten with 2 or 3 tablespoons of cream or evaporated milk as it comes from the can. As soon as the bread has toasted on one side, take it out of the oven, butter the untoasted side, and spread it with the meat clear to the edge of the toast, so the edges can't burn. Then broil for 5 to 10 minutes under the flame and serve at once.

KADDERLY:

And you won't need to ring the dinner bell twice.

VAN DEMAN:

I hope not. It needs to be eaten hot. Ground meat has a way of shrinking and stiffening as it cools. Of course if it's a meat loaf sliced cold, that's another story.

KADDERLY:

I hope you can tell us how to make a meat loaf that will slice and not crumble.

VAN DEMAN:

The secret of that is the right binder---a thick white sauce, or mashed potatoes, or flour kneaded in with the meat, with enough fat for richness. And then baking the loaf slowly in an open pan in a moderate oven, around 350 to 375 degrees.

KADDERLY:

I should think that an open pan and slow baking would dry it out.

VAN DEMAN:

No, that's the biggest discovery of modern meat research. It's intense heat that makes the fibers of meat turn and twist and give up their juice. If the heat's moderate, and the lean's well protected with fat, the meat cooks evenly and more of its juice stays put. But of course you need enough heat to make it brown. Now that hamburger steak wrapped in a curl of bacon and cooked on onion rings - - - -

KADDERLY:

Onion rings, page Mike Rowell.

MIKE ROWELL:

Here. Haven't you learned yet, Wallace, I'm always ready and waiting for onions?

VAN DEMAN:

And incidentally waiting to give your market news. How about an item on meat for consumers?

ROWELL:

Yes, I have one right here. A very encouraging one for consumers. I'm not so sure about the producers. Beef prices are dropping all the time now, especially for the better grades. And of course these cuts you've been talking about, Miss Van Deman, are always in the lower brackets.

VAN DEMAN:

That's what our friend Mrs. Young Homemaker was figuring on of course. And she can buy exactly the quantity she needs for the two of them, or for a crowd when they have friends in to play ping pong.

ROWELL:

And there's no waste on ground meat. No bones. No gristle. Not even any extra fat to throw away.

KADDERLY:

A perfect machine age product.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, it's the only way I know to handle the less tender cuts so you can cook them as though they were tender in the first place.

KADDERLY:

Are you handing me these leaflets to take home or to announce to our Farm and Home friends.

VAN DEMAN:

Either, both, as you will.

KADDERLY:

All right. Announcement first. "Meat Dishes at Low Cost", a pamphlet from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. I think it must have 40 or 50 recipes for cooking all kinds of meat, recipes worked out by the meat research people in the Bureau of Home Economics. If you want a copy of "Meat Dishes at Low Cost" just drop a card to the Bureau of Home Economics here in Washington. And here's another one on beef alone--- "Cooking Beef According to the Cut". It has recipes and directions for cooking all the different cuts of beef, based on these new scientific principles that Ruth Van Deman spoke of a moment ago. Two free leaflets on cooking meat---"Meat Dishes at Low Cost"---"Cooking Beef According to the Cut".

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